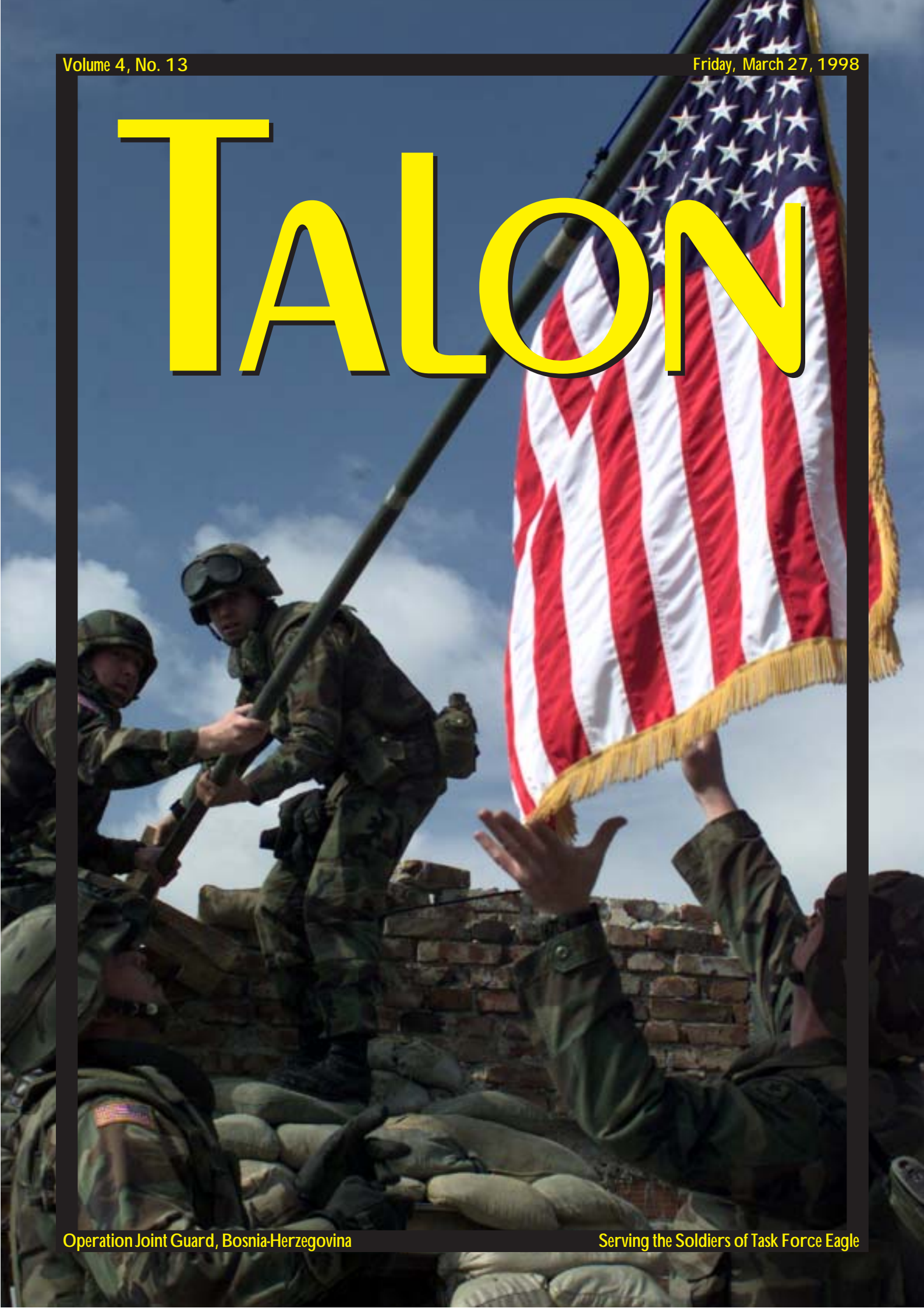


TALON





Cargo Planes 5
AF transports it all



Making Friends 8
Soldiers visit Bosnian children



Tower Guardians 11
Eagle Troops protect the airway

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On the Cover

Sergeant First Class Lance Lehr reaches up to secure the American flag that flew over Sierra 10 as it is lowered by Staff Sergeant Wes Rehm and Specialist Stephen Mitchell. Also pictured (forefront left) is Specialist Oliver Buck. The outpost was officially closed Friday, March 20. (Photo by Staff Sergeant Jack McNeely, see pages 6 and 7).

The Task Force Eagle Web site is located at www.tfeagle.army.mil

The Task Force Eagle web site will offer breaking news as it happens on its new web site. Messages to Task Force Eagle soldiers as well as information for soldiers is available. The Talon On-line is updated every Saturday. Webmaster: Sergeant Robert R. Ramon. Or contact us at: The Public Affairs Office, Eagle Base, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina APO, AE 09789, Telephone MSE 551-5230, Sprint 762-5233.

Up Front

By Command Sergeant Major
 Carl E. Christian
 Task Force Eagle CSM

Human error and mistakes. Knowing that we will never totally eliminate them, we all must come to grips with the issue. Part of the human error problem is caused by soldiers deliberately doing something they shouldn't be doing, and knowingly violating established rules and procedures. But this part of human error is caused by lack of training and guidance, poor supervision resulting in stress, and other factors related to the breakdown of the support system.

There are ways to alleviate human errors: Improve training and standard operating procedures, tighten supervision and, in short, stop and fix the system. Fixing the individual is more resource intensive. Caring leadership is the key. Caring implies respect, dignity and upholding the standard.

Caring, however, is a two-way path. If the leader demonstrates a professional caring demeanor, then the soldier will in return respond with loyalty to the unit and the leader, personal discipline and consideration for his teammates.

Individual soldiers must care enough about their unit and personal performance to police themselves and their fellow soldiers. It is not enough to be your brother's keeper, but you must also be a team player. We must understand that we are all an integral part of this operation. It takes the efforts of all of us to do our mission. We must be supportive of others, understand our own limitations and use our fellow soldiers abilities to compensate for our shortcomings.

It is up to other noncommissioned officers of Task Force Eagle to fix accountability, tighten supervision, and set and enforce the standard. We must be out-front of mistakes and constantly on guard for potential errors. And finally, we must remember, "TODAY IS THE BEST DAY TO BE A SOLDIER."



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Bedrock: home away from home

Story and photos By Sergeant Tim Fischer
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

You are sitting at home in your favorite recliner, dog at your feet, remote control in hand, enjoying the intense action of March Madness on your big screen TV. This could easily be considered one of life's finer qualities.

While we don't have all of the amenities of home, the members of the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment have definite plans to improve the quality of life for the troops. First Sergeant Frank E. Patterson, a 21-year veteran from Dublin, Ind., is the first sergeant for the Headquarters Company of the 2-6th Infantry Battalion located in Baumholder, Germany. This is Patterson's second tour here in Bosnia; he was here during the IFOR stage of Operation Joint Guard in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"I plan to do everything in my power to upgrade the quality of life here at Camp Bedrock," said Patterson. A functioning Internet service is high priority, he said, because the service members at Bedrock need the ability to communicate with their families and friends back home.

Ensuring the welfare of several hundred military personnel at Bedrock is a huge task, but the members of the 2-6th plan to tackle it with zeal, improving the quality of life here at "the Rock". Working hand in hand with the MWR representatives, they plan to leave the Bedrock facility better than when they got here.

"The maintenance of the latrines and lavatories is a big concern of ours. The soldiers can report any deficiencies to the Mayor's office 24-hours a day," said Patterson. "We are encouraging the soldiers to report anything they see that is not functional."

Since arriving here, the 2-6 has kept the MWR telephones in good working order without a break in service to the service members. They also plan to improve the internet service.

"I have a message to all the troops here at Camp Bedrock, if you need something from the PX or from MWR, please, just ask the appropriate people. If you don't ask, we don't know what they want," said Patterson.

Boosting the morale of all the troops here at Camp Bedrock is very important task for the 2-6th, and they plan to take all the necessary measures to increase the quality of life here.



Wayne A. Terrell, is an 8-year civilian Recreation Specialist from Arvada, Colo. Terrell is the Morale, Welfare and Recreation representative located at Camp Bedrock. "I have been working directly with First Sergeant Patterson planing new projects here at Camp Bedrock to increase the quality of life here."



Sergeant Bryce L. Silkwood, 28 from Susanville, Calif. is with Headquarters Company, 2-6th Infantry Regiment located at Camp Bedrock, Bosnia. "I like the location here at Camp Bedrock, the services provided here, like the cappuccino shop, and the weight room. One thing I would like to improve is the Education center, we need more courses."



First Sergeant Frank E. Patterson, a 21-year veteran from Dublin, Ind., the First Sergeant for the Head Quarters Company of the 2-6th Infantry Regiment from Baumholder, Germany. "I plan to do everything in my powers to upgrade the Quality of life here at Camp Bedrock."



Sergeant Alex E. Wade, 25, from Ocala, Fla., is with the 351st Military Police Company. "In my opinion the quality of life at Camp Bedrock is pretty good, if I could change it I would increase the DSN capabilities, and more interaction with the local population."

Soldiers attract a crowd

423rd M.P. Co. delivers school supplies and toys

Story and photo by Staff Sergeant Jack McNeely
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

A large crowd filled with anticipation gathers around members of the 423rd Military Police Company from New York. But, instead of donning their riot protection gear, these peacekeepers were armed with school supplies and toys.

"It's a thrill to put a smile on the faces of these children," said Staff Sergeant John F. Rondeau, 36, of Worcester, Mass. "I wish I could do more."

Rondeau led the 423rd M.P. school distribution convoy Monday, March 16, from Camp Dobol to St. Save Primary School in nearby Zvornik. The Republika Srpska port city is located along the Drina River approximately 16 miles east of Camp Dobol.

"We have a 2.5-ton loaded to the top with school supplies, toys and three computers," said Rondeau, who volunteered to participate in the Operation Joint Guard deployment with the New York reservists. The Desert Storm veteran is a member of the 344th M.P. Co. from Massachusetts.

The supplies and toys were delivered to St. Save, named after the first teacher in Serb history. It is the largest school in this area with an enrollment of 3,500 students in grades 1-8. And according to Director Radosav Peric, 361 of those children lost their fathers during the civil war that ravaged the region earlier this decade.

"Thank you for the gifts for these children," Peric told the members of the 423rd through interpreter Sanja Kronic, who learned English as a student at St. Save from 1981-89.

"Some of these students lost both parents in the fighting," added the 49-year-old Peric, who began his education career at St. Save in 1972. He was named director in 1993. "I know they appreciate these gifts."

Peric made the analogy of the gifts to his basic education philosophy. "It's not knowledge when you just know it. It's knowledge when you can pass it to someone else. These gifts are like knowledge, and America has proven itself in the giving of these gifts," he said.

Meanwhile, Sergeant Michael Mohn, a 17-year veteran of the 423rd M.P. Co., said his life becomes richer every time he

participates in a school distribution project. "It's a very good feeling," said the 41-year-old Long Island, N.Y. resident.

Sergeant Dwight Ford, 27, also of Long Island, interjected, "It's great to see their faces light up when you deliver toys."

"You can tell they really appreciate it," added Specialist John Fleischer, 21, of New York.

Most of the school supplies and toys were sent to the war-torn Balkan region by students from Parisipanni High School



Specialist John Fleischer a member of the 423rd Military Police Company, helps unload a 2.5-ton vehicle filled with school supplies, toys and three IBM computers to St. Save Primary School in Zvornik.

in New Jersey. Peric, the school's director, assured his students would write letters of appreciation and send them to the American school.

The 423rd continued its humanitarian efforts Tuesday, March 17, by delivering another fully loaded 2.5-ton to St. Save's sister school in a nearby Zvornik suburb.

"Of course, we would rather deal with a crowd of eager students rather than a bunch of protesters. We consider it a good day when we don't have to wear our riot gear. And this is definitely a great day," Rondeau concluded as he waved to the grateful children of St. Save Primary School.

'Air Tuzla' gives freight, passengers lift

United States Air Force transports it all through the air

Story and photo by Specialist Nancy McMillan
196th Public Affairs Det.

The huge, metal bird with a belly full of cargo and passengers, looks too heavy to fly, nonetheless, get off the ground — but it does, even with freight weighing as much as 65 tons.

The cargo ranges from mail to supplies, to equipment to military personnel; and it is the United States Air Force (USAF) who is tasked with the logistics of its movement.

"The whole process starts with a morning schedule of flights," said Captain Ken Heath, Logistics Squadron Commander. "We then call Ramstein Air Base to see what the cargo is, how many pallets and how many pounds it weighs," he said.

According to Master Sergeant Timothy J. Jones, Tuzla Aerial Port Superintendent, the USAF expedites aircraft flow through the airfield by performing ERO (engine running on/off)

loads, which take an average of 12 to 14 minutes from "wheels down" to takeoff.

"We handle all the Stabilization Force and NATO cargo planes in and out of Tuzla Air Base," said Jones. "We get an average of six C-130s a day."

Recent statistics for the first nine days in March show that the USAF unloaded approximately 258 tons of cargo and assisted 1,207 passengers. Statistics on outbound from Charlie ramp for the first two weeks of March recorded 91.8 tons of freight and 778 passengers.

Top priority among everyone here is safety. "Being safe is paramount," said Jones. "We have daily safety briefings, eye and ear protection is a must, along with being proficient with hand signals. Everyone here is experienced and knows their job," Jones said, "and that adds to the safety of the mission."

So with experience and safety, the team members load and unload aircraft with little delay and keep them up and flying.



(From left to right) Staff Sergeant Tom Mohn, Staff Sergeant Jeffery Powell and Senior Airman Don Herrod adjust some packages on a pallet before loading it on a C-130.

Progress in Bosnia closes Sierra

Story and photos by Staff Sergeant Jack McNeely
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

They've all stood guard in the war-damaged Bosnian home overlooking Sierra 10; their names etched in a concrete wall that supports no roof. "Harry." "Tony." "Gino." "Jackson." "Big Daddy."

These names are all that link the war-torn memorial to Operation Joint Guard, the NATO-led peacekeeping mission in the Balkan region. Sierra 10, a once-pivotal outpost linking the Federation of Bosnia and the Republika Srpska, officially closed Friday, March 20.

Members of Fox Troop, 2nd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment from nearby Camp Dobol were fittingly gathered at the roadside outpost on this crisp, sun-drenched Friday morning to bid farewell. Fox Troop has occupied Sierra 10 since arriving in Bosnia last August.

"I'd like to thank you for the work you've done here," Captain Ross Coffman, Fox Troop commander, told his troops during the closing ceremony. "You have truly represented your country, your

regiment and your troop."

According to Coffman, the flag lowering ceremony was symbolic of the progress made between the two former warring factions. "The Bosnian people are that much closer to freedom and democracy. That's what our colors represent," said the 32-year-old Williamsburg, Va., native.

Located about three miles east of Dobol in the Zone of Separation, Sierra 10 was created by Implementation Force to help stabilize the area and to control traffic.

Platoons from the 2-2 ACR rotated on two-week tours at the once surrounded, triple-strand concertina wired checkpoint.

From the roof of the war-torn house – where the American flag was hoisted each day – soldiers watched the main road from Tuzla to Zvornik. Other duties included mounted and foot patrols through the towns of Osmaci, Mahala and Memici; all heavily damaged during the war.

Sierra 10 had been an important meeting place for local officials and business leaders from both sides of the ZOS. The meetings improved economic development in the area

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A construction crew of 133rd Naval Mobile Seabees disassemble a tier three tent frame at Sierra-10.



The guard shack that overlooks Sierra-10. Army presence are the sandbagged firing in the wall.

a 10

ostered better relations between the Bosnian
ation of Muslims and Croats and the Republika Srpska.
anwhile, Coffman absorbed the closing with mixed
ns. "I'm a little sad. Sierra 10 has been an outstanding
or my men to get out and meet the people of Bosnia.
d I'm happy it's going away because it's a sign of
ss," he explained.

geant First Class Lance Lehr, 3rd platoon sergeant,
his commander's sentiments for Sierra 10. "It provid-
ood opportunity for my men to train and get away from
ain of command at Dobol. I hate to see it close, but at the
ime it's good to know we are one step closer to accom-
g the SFOR mission," said the 33-year-old La Habra
Calif., native.

n though there are no tents left, no Old Glory waving in
nd, and no U.S. troops stationed at Sierra 10, remnants
ongoing peacekeeping mission remain. Just ask
," "Tony," "Gino," "Jackson," and "Big Daddy" — their
s and spirits forever etched in this bookmark of
tion Joint Guard history.



Captain Ross Coffman, commander of Fox Troop, 2nd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, applauds his troops for their efforts while manning Sierra 10. First Sergeant Jimmy Burnett holds the American flag that had been lowered from the Camp Dobol outpost.



Sierra 10 sits idle now — the only evidence of U.S. fighting positions and names of soldiers etched



Sergeant First Class Lance Lehr retrieves the American flag that flew over Sierra 10.

Bedrock soldiers visit children

Story and photos by Sergeant Tim Fischer
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

While the soldiers of the Stabilization Forces (SFOR) travel the picturesque area performing their daily peace keeping missions here in Bosnia, there is one common occurrence. The smiles and waves from the little children walking on the side of the roads bring a warm feeling to the hearts of the soldiers here.

Seizing the opportunity to work directly with the young children is a welcome task for U.S. soldiers at Camp Bedrock. Due to the nature of the missions here, that opportunity is not always available. Corporal George S. Drye is doing everything in his power to change that. Drye is the chaplain's assistant for the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment from Baumholder, Germany.

Drye said, "I feel like often I'm the bridge between the enlisted soldiers and the chaplain, who is an officer. Being an enlisted soldier, they feel better talking to me first."

The men of the 2-6th approached Drye, looking for a way to get out and meet the children. With assistance from Chaplain, Captain Jerry C. Sieg from Lock Haven, Pa., they organized and acquired the humanitarian supplies to give to a local primary school.

Drye, a 25 year-old Aberdeen, Md. native and eleven other soldiers from the 2-6th delivered over thirty large boxes of school

supplies to the Tusanj Primary School in Tuzla.

"Many of the soldiers came forward and expressed their desires to participate in the ongoing humanitarian aid mission here in Bosnia," said Drye. "We plan to go out and visit many other schools in the future."

Once the soldiers arrived at the school, Sieg encouraged the men to relax and mingle with the children. The soldiers watched a puppet show, played soccer and spent quality time with the children.

"I love the children. As soon as I sat down, they all came over and sat next to me, I couldn't even get up," Sieg continued. "It put a whole new light on our involvement here."

Drye, the Chaplain's "right hand man", has many responsibilities that require him to maintain the chapel, a field sanctuary, the chaplain's vehicle, type memorandums, and many other spiritual functions when Sieg is not available.

"I feel like I have a great deal of responsibility here in Bosnia, to ensure the spiritual well-being of all the men with the 2-6th. That is why we are planning more visits to the local schools. It puts a good feeling of the peacekeeping mission in their hearts," said Drye.

Through his initiative, Drye is providing the soldiers the opportunity to help the children of Bosnia. As Drye said, this type of contact gives the soldiers a whole different perspective on their mission.



Corporal George S. Drye with 2-6th Infantry Regiment sits with the students from Tusanj Primary School.



Corporal George S. Drye delivers humanitarian aid to Tusanj Primary School. Drye is a member of the 2-6th Infantry Regiment out of Baumholder, Germany.

Belgians keep COMMO running smoothly

Story and photo by First Lieutenant Annmarie Daneker
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

The telephone link between Eagle Base and Camp Comanche may not be as sophisticated as the system on a mythical starship but it is still a vital element in the transfer of communication. The main connection between these nearby camps is a reliable satellite system, but

if that signal is disrupted then the HQ, AFCENT Div, CRSG AWCS, D Troop ("Kelly's Heroes") out of Antwerp, Belgium, is called to action to keep the communication running smooth.

"We provide a radio relay link between Comanche Base and Tuzla Main as back up for the main," said First Sergeant Pierre Lakiere, 29, from Antwerp, Belgium. "This link is used with the main connection and takes over in transmitting if there is any kind of a break in the signal."

He said the radio backup system is always up and running in tandem with the satellite system but doesn't take over actual broadcasting until necessary. "We have been transmitting continuously for eight months now, without even one break in the signal," said Lakiere, with a hint of pride in his voice.

The small, four-member unit has called Camp Comanche home since December and is currently packing up for redeployment. The previous rotation was also at the same location for 4 months and neither group experienced any failures in their system. D Troop also expects that the unit replacing them will continue with the established tradition on continuous transmitting.

"We have been transmitting continuously for eight months now, without even one break in the signal".

First Sergeant Pierre Lakiere

Although the system is self-sufficient and doesn't require an operator, there is an observer on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. CLC Stefaan Lelievre, 36, from St.-Truiden, Belgium is one of the radio operators assigned to Camp Comanche.

"My job here is to ensure that the signal between the camps stays strong if our system is called into use," Lelievre said.

"We perform daily checks on the link to ensure that the antenna is leveled and once a week we check the generator, which is the backup if the main transmitter fails," said KPL1 Jean-Paul Valcq, 29, from Maastricht, The Netherlands, and also a radio operator. The equipment requires very little maintenance but it's important that the system is in top working condition when we finally need it.

"We had good cooperation with the Americans and appreciate the support we received from them," Lakiere said, extending a warm "thank you" to all the soldiers that worked with D Troop.



CLC Fred Op deweerdt, 1SGT Pierre Lakiere, both of Antwerp, Belgium and CLC Stefaan Lelievre of St-Truiden, Belgium, load equipment for the backup telephone system in preparation for redeployment.

Chow train conquers a mountain



First Lieutenant Jae C. Rood double checks the chains on his Humvee before continuing up Mt. Zep to the radio tower base camp.

Story by First Lieutenant Lillian Sydenstricker
Photos by Sergeant Oreta Spencer
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

The snow-blown air infiltrates the gunner's protective clothing. He taps his foot to the rhythm of the tune in his head. His hands lay in his lap as the snow swirls around his head. His red face bears the chill. He watches to make sure the "Chow Train" gets to Mount Zep without any problems.

For Private John Quillen, 20, of Detroit, Mich., and the rest of the 3rd Platoon, Eagle Troop, this mission continues every other day despite the harsh elements. "This mission depends on me staying situationally aware of my surroundings," explains Quillen.

The "Chow Train" does much more than deliver a hot meal to troops on Mount

Zep. It is also used for troop rotation, mail delivery, fuel supply, heater and vehicle maintenance.

"We deliver anything that needs to go up to Mount Zep. For example, if they need a mechanic to go up to fix a vehicle we would take him up," says Sergeant First Class Andrew Connette, 32, from Williamstown, N.C. Connette is the noncommissioned officer in charge of the "Chow Train."

The trip from Camp Demi varies as much as the climate on the 1,500-foot summit. When weather is poor, the trip can take over two hours.

Furthermore, if the conditions of the steep, winding road leading to the summit are nonnavigable, the "Chow Train" crew sits idle at the base of the mountain.

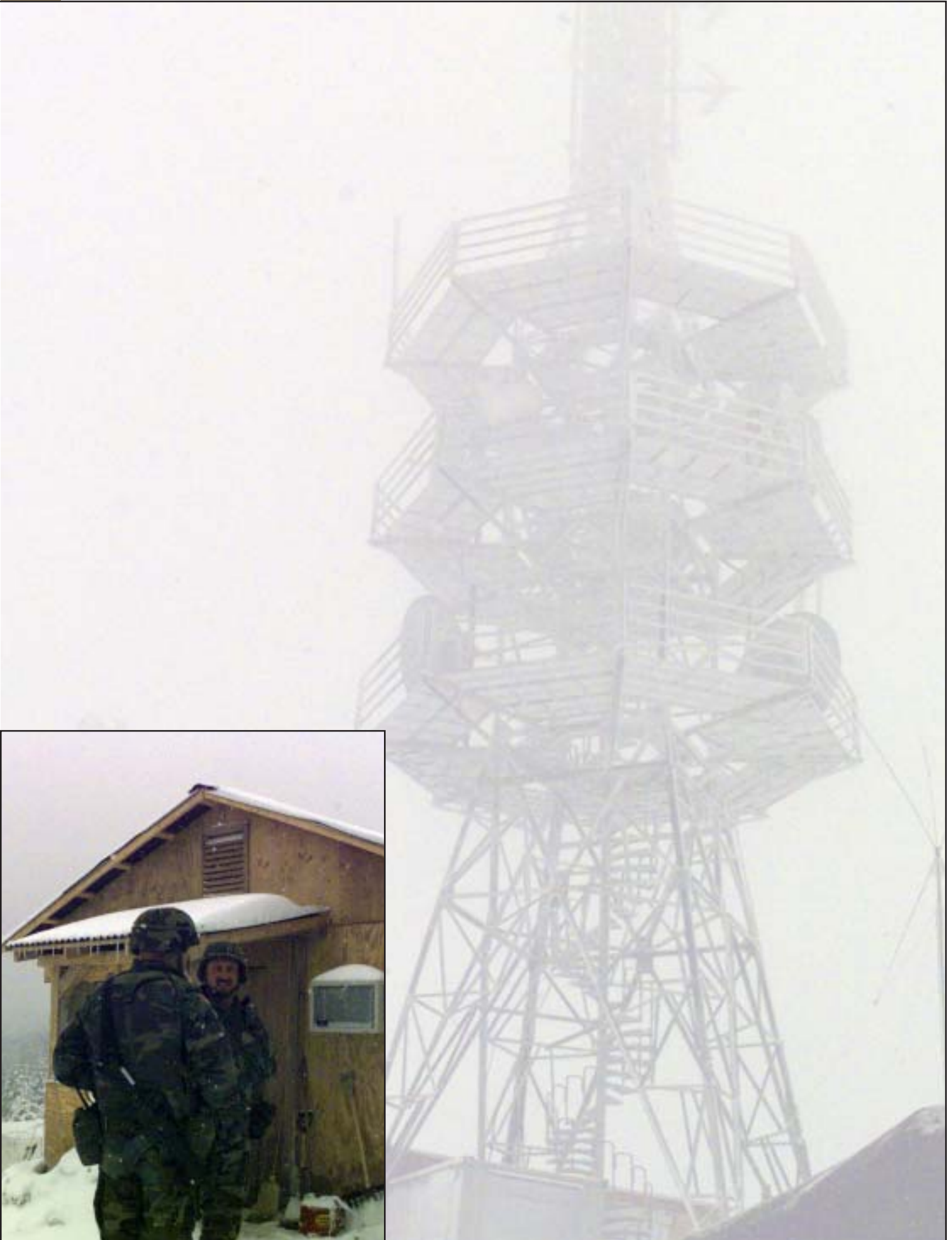
"Their equipment on the hill is more prepared to get up and down than we are," said 1st Lieutenant Jae Rood, of Buffalo, Minn. Rood, 26, is the officer in charge of the train.

Meanwhile Eagle Troop soldiers, members of the 2nd Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment from Fort Polk, La., maintain a steadfast vigilance on the imposing heights of the frozen Mount Zep.

Every five days the Mount Zep troops are rotated. "We get to go up on the hill in two days and the people that are on the hill now will bring us chow and supplies a couple of days after we get there," Rood explains.

Connette said that the soldiers are depending on them to be there for food and supplies in even the worst of weather. He said the 3rd Platoon, Eagle Troop will be there regardless of the conditions and will always hold the trust in them at the highest level to get through to the soldiers on the hill.





Friday, March 27, 1998

Talon

11

1st Armored Division Olympics

Squads compete in soldier-related events

Story and Photos by Sergeant Oreta M. Spencer
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

To test the best is an arduous and exhausting effort, especially in a competitive environment like the event at Camp Dobol recently.

"The mud was fun. The mud was good. Mud makes you tough," exclaimed Private First Class William Carmichael after competing in a mentally and physically challenging squad competition held Sunday, March 15, at Camp Dobol.

Members of Company C, 2nd Brigade, 6th Infantry, 1st Armored Division stationed at Baumholder, Germany, came to Camp Dobol to utilize the unique terrain features in their monthly squad competition.

"We were able to add a few new events due to Camp Dobol's terrain. We added marksmanship this time. Usually we don't have a range within walking distance," said Second Lieutenant Joseph A. Geer, 26, of Kona, Hawaii. "We were pleased to be able to add this to our competition."

The squads compete against each other. They take these competitions seriously and prepare for this challenge each month.

"The competition pumps soldiers up. They spend a lot of time rehearsing. It breaks up the monotony of day-to-day battle focus training," Captain Kenny Mintz, 29, of San Diego, Calif., the company commander, said. "I think the soldiers have a great time doing this."

"When you challenge soldiers like this, the teamwork comes out and it molds them together to make a more

cohesive team and that is what is really important, especially for infantry units like us," Mintz commented.

The competition starts with an in-ranks inspection to include full battle gear and camouflage makeup. Each soldier is checked with attention to detail from head to toe.

The next phase took them through a written test on their knowledge of weapons capabilities and characteristics to include rules of engagement.

Once through with mental tests, the squads take a lunch break to prepare themselves for the final stages that will test their physical endurance.

"It is a rough terrain race with a little bit of mud mixed with a little bit of fun," Geer stated.

Covered in mud and physically exhausted, the soldiers rest on the 25mm target range to prepare themselves for the final event – King of the Ring.

"The best part was the refreshing mud right after the run. It's fun to train like this; it's a learning experience I won't forget," exclaimed Private Cory Orstead, 19, of Chicago, a member of the winning Third Platoon.

"King of the Ring is another test of physical toughness. The object is to throw the other squads out of the ring," explains Geer. "The goal is to be the last one standing in the ring when it is over."

"Combat is a contest. There is no second place in combat, and that is really the point we are trying to drive home with competitions like this," Mintz continues. "They will remember today. This competition was quite memorable. I will have to come up with something better next month."

Private First Class Jeremy Duff pulls himself out of the mud and water during the monthly squad competition held at Camp Dobol.